

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 DHA-02 IO-13 MCT-01

EURE-00 /087 W

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P R 141137Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7122

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

USMISSION NATO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SP

SUBJECT: OVER 200,000 ANSWER BASQUE STRIKE CALL

REF: MADRID 6919

1. IN PROTEST OVER FATAL SHOOTING OF BASQUE YOUTH BY POLICE ON
SEPT 8 (REFTEL), THE BASQUE PROVINCES OF GUIPUZCOA AND VIZCAYA
WERE HIT YESTERDAY BY WIDESPREAD STRIKE ACTIVITY AND NUMEROUS
DEMONSTRATIONS. AMCONSUL BILBAO CONFIRMS PRESS REPORTS THAT
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GUIPUZCOA, WHERE OVER 120,000 WORKERS REPORTEDLY WERE IDLED,

WAS EFFECTIVELY SHUT DOWN. IN VIZCAYA, WHERE OVER 70,000 WORKERS REPORTEDLY WERE ON STRIKE, THE INDUSTRIAL PLANTS OF BILBAO AND ITS SUBURBS WERE SILENCED.

2. NUMEROUS CONFRONTATIONS BETWEEN POLICE AND DEMONSTRATORS--IN SOME CASES NUMBERING IN THE THOUSANDS--OCCURRED IN BOTH PROVINCES, WITH THE MOST VIOLENT DISTURBANCES TAKING PLACE IN BILBAO'S INDUSTRIAL SUBURBS OF SESTAO AND BASAURI. ONE PERSON REPORTEDLY WAS WOUNDED BY POLICE GUNFIRE. TEN WERE INJURED, NONE SERIOUSLY, IN VARIOUS MELEES. AS THE RESULT OF POPULAR PRESSURE, SOME CITY GOVTS IN GUIPUZCOA REPORTEDLY HAVE RESIGNED AND MORE RESIGNATIONS ARE EXPECTED. THE FORMER MAYOR OF FUENTERRABIA, WHO RESIGNED IN PROTEST OVER THE SHOOTING, REPORTEDLY HAS COME TO MADRID AT THE HEAD OF A DELEGATION OF GUIPUZCOAN MAYORS TO MEET WITH GOVT OFFICIALS. CITY OFFICIALS OF SAN SEBASTIAN, THE PROVINCIAL CAPITAL, REPORTEDLY HAVE REQUESTED A MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER SUAREZ.

3. THE OTHER BASQUE PROVINCES OF NAVARRE AND ALAVA REMAINED CALM DURING THE DAY, BUT PAMPLONA, NAVARRE, WAS THE SCENE OF A DEMONSTRATION LAST NIGHT, WHEN 10,000 PEOPLE REPORTEDLY TOOK TO THE STREETS AFTER A MEMORIAL MASS FOR THE SLAIN YOUTH. THERE HAVE BEEN NO REPORTED DEMONSTRATIONS THUS FAR TODAY, AND AMCONSUL BILBAO ADVISES THAT THE SITUATION IN THE VIZCAYAN CAPITAL APPEARS TO HAVE COOLED SOMEWHAT. HOWEVER, WORKERS ALONG BILBAO'S HEAVILY INDUSTRIALIZED LEFT BANK ARE MEETING TO DISCUSS WHETHER TO CONTINUE THEIR PROTEST ACTIVITY. SUCH MEETINGS ARE CERTAIN TO BE UNDER WAY IN GUIPUZCOA AS WELL. AND TENSIONS ARE SURE TO CONTINUE TO RUN HIGH IN THE TWO PROVINCES FOR THE NEXT DAYS, AT LEAST.

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